DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 304 017 FL 017 815

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TITLE An Effective Teacher--The Students' Point of View.
PUB DATE 10 Mar 88
NOTE 31p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (22nd, Chicago, IL, March 8-13, 1988).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Students; *English (Second Language); Higher Education; Intensive Language Courses; *Language Teachers; *Student Attitudes; Surveys; *Teacher Characteristics; *Teacher Effectiveness; *Teacher Role
IDENTIFIERS Rutgers The State University New Brunswick NJ

ABSTRACT

Students in an intensive college-level program of English as a second language were surveyed concerning their perceptions of effective language teacher characteristics and behaviors. The 71 students reprsented 15 diverse native language groups at different English proficiency levels. The questionnaire presented 23 teacher qualities generated in a previous class discussion and asked students to select the five most important teacher qualities, ranked in order of importance. The teacher qualities included affective characteristics, aspects of classroom performance, professional expertise and training, and miscellaneous traits. Although the questionnaires were anonymous, the respondents' gender, native language, and proficiency level were recorded, and tables summarize the preferences according to these characteristics. Results were mixed, but suggest that classroom atmosphere and relationships are at least as important to students as content. An appendix entitled, "On Teachers and Teaching: Reflections from around the World. Quotations from our Students" is included. (MSE)

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ED304017

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AN EFFECTIVE TEACHER--THE STUDENTS' POINT OF VIEW

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MARCH 10, 1988

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AN EFFECTIVE TEACHER -- THE STUDENT'S POINT OF VIEW

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There are many different ways to evaluate teacher effectiveness. We can look at it by asking the people who prepare the teachers at the formal level, those who hire them after they have completed their preparation for the classroom, other teachers, or their supervisors. I became interested in looking at "the effective teacher" from the student's point of view.

The students that I am teaching are in an Intensive English program, P.A.L.S., an acronym for the Program in American Language Studies, at Rutgers University in New Jersey. I am currently serving as Curriculum Coordinator of the Intensive program. Our students come to us for a variety of reasons: simply to learn to communicate in English and have a language-learning experience, to learn English in order to enter an American university, or because they feel it will help them in business or in obtaining a job in the future; some enjoy the proximity to the cultural events that New York has to offer while having the campus life in New Jersey. We have six levels, ranging from Level A, our beginning level, to Level F, our most advanced level.

Last semester I had asked my Level E (Advanced) students to write a brief composition on "A Good Teacher" as an initial exercise. I felt that, as adults, they had all had sufficient experiences to draw upon; as they did not know me, they would not be writing a profile of "me" simply to please me. It was interesting to read their comments and attitudes toward teachers, in general, and teacher behavior. I told them that they could illustrate by giving an example of "an effective teacher" that they had had in the past, if they wished to do so.

This semester my interest was aroused by a writing task which my Level C (Intermediate level) students had to complete in the first chapter of their texts. They were presented with qualities of a language learner and were asked which they thought might be most helpful in being successful at learning a new language. This seemed to interest them. As a follow-up task, we began to discuss what qualities they felt "an effective teacher" would need to have, as compared to the language learner. This seemed to interest them even more. It was certainly a subject on which everyone had an opinion. We brainstormed, and they came up with a list of qualities which we put on the board. After discussing these, I asked them to write a short piece on their opinion of "a good

teacher." No one had any difficulty in writing "something" about this topic.

After reading what they had written, I began to think more about the notion of "the effective teacher" because I found their responses to be very interesting. In my capacity as Curriculum Coordinator, I often have to help to acclimate new teachers and assist them in learning about the program, curriculum sequencing, materials, etc. Some ask for help; questions usually pertain to what pages to cover in texts, what possible supplementary materials to use, etc. I began, after speaking with the students, to think about the fact that no one ever asks me about the students' expectations, the kinds of students we have in the program...I felt that the new teachers should be asking me more of these kinds of questions.

What are our students' expectations of what the "effective" ESL teacher is or should be? From the literature, it has been difficult, in general, to measure teacher effectiveness. Should it be based on the students' degree of comfort in the classroom? derived from test achievement or degree of improvement in the proficiency level? In terms of the population we are dealing with, adult language learners, what do they believe are important qualities for their instructors to possess? What characteristics of teacher behavior do they see as significant or desirable? It was decided to compile a questionnaire by which students might assess these qualities.

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The subjects surveyed were 71 nonnative speakers of English who were, at the time of the survey, studying in the Intensive English program. Fifteen native language groups were represented: Spanish (23%), Arabic (18%), Turkish (13%), Greek (11%), Chinese (8%), Japanese (8%), French (4%), Portuguese (4%), German (3%), Indonesian (3%), Korean (1%), Hebrew (1%), Italian (1%), Polish (1%), and Bulgarian (1%). Of the students, 51% were male and 49% were female.

In the program, students at different levels of language proficiency were: Level B (18%), Level C-1 (16%), Level C-2 (17%), Level D (20%), Level E (18%), and Level F (11%). For the purposes of this study, Level A students were not invited to participate, as the level of vocabulary would have been too difficult for them to interpret.

BREAKDOWN OF STUDENTS SAMPLED:

BY LEVEL:

LEVEL	NUMBER
B	13
C-1	11
C-2	12
D	14
E	13
F	8

BY GENDER:

MALES	FEMALES
36,	35

BY COUNTRY/LANGUAGE GROUP:

ASIA:

COUNTRY	LANGUAGE	NUMBER
China	Chinese	1
Taiwan	Chinese	5
Japan	Japanese	6
Korea	Korean	1
Indonesia	Indonesian	2

ASIA MINOR:

Turkey	Turkish	9

MIDDLE EAST:

Egypt	Arabic	2
Lebanon	Arabic	3
Syria	Arabic	3
Jordan	Arabic	3
Israel	Hebrew	1

NORTH AFRICA:

Morocco	Arabic	2

AFRICA:

Cameroon	French	1

LATIN AMERICA:		
Peru	Spanish	1
Argentina	Spanish	1
Venezuela	Spanish	3
Colombia	Spanish	6
Panama	Spanish	1
Honduras	Spanish	2
Brazil	Portuguese	3
EUROPE:		
Spain	Spanish	2
Switzerland	German	2
Italy	Italian	1
France	French	1
Belgium	French	1
Greece	Greek	5
Cyprus	Greek	3
Poland	Polish	1
Bulgaria	Bulgarian	1
NORTH AMERICA:		
Canada	French	1

What is your opinion of what makes "a good teacher"?

This is the question that was asked of Level C students as part of a writing assignment. The following are some of the qualities/characteristics the students mentioned.

A good teacher should:

1) be kind

2) be patient

3) be helpful

4) be friendly

5) be motivated

6) be knowledgeable in his/her field

7) love his/her job

8) be intelligent

9) be able to communicate/get across ideas to the class

10)be willing to answer questions

11)be hard-working

12)be able to challenge the students

13)be organized

14)be able to explain material clearly

15)have experience

16)be enthusiastic

17)be knowledgeable about the material he/she is teaching

18)be male/female

19)have good educational background

20)have the ability to relate to the students and understand their problems

21)be "active" and energetic when teaching

22)be polite and respect the students

23)be beautiful

Of all the qualities mentioned, please list the five that YOU think are the most important to be an effective teacher.

#____ _____

#____ _____

#____ _____

#____ _____

#____ _____

Now, please number them from #1 to #5, in order of priority, in your opinion.

Please check the correct space below and indicate your country and native language.

Thank you for your help.

_____ Male _____ Female

_____ Native country

_____ Native language

Procedure

The survey consisted of twenty-three qualities/ characteristics, generated during a brainstorming session for prewriting on the subject of "What is a good teacher?" during a writing class with Intermediate level students. All comments were accepted; no value judgments were made. It was hoped that students would simply express what they felt was important.

The items were printed at random on questionnaires. Surveys were later administered in Level C-2, the class generating the items, as well as in five other levels. The other levels were Advanced Beginners (Level B), a generally weaker Low Intermediate section (Level C-1), High Intermediates (Level D), Advanced (Level E), and Most Advanced (Level F). (Generally there is one Intermediate level group, but, because of high enrollment, the group had been divided into two sections.)

From the surveys, students were asked to select five items that they felt were the most significant. After they had chosen five, they were asked to rank these in order of preference/priority. They were told that we were interested in seeing their responses because it could possibly be helpful for teachers to know the students' opinions. This information could be helpful to new teachers in the program, and perhaps this could lead to a better student/teacher relationship and to better learning experiences. It was stressed that there were no "right" or "wrong" answers. The questionnaire was to be anonymous. To see if being male or female or coming from a particular language/cultural background could alter/affect perceptions of what an effective teacher was, students were also asked to fill in this information.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

As illustrated in Table 1, responses during the brainstorming session included many types of characteristics ranging from personal qualities to classroom teaching techniques to educational preparation and knowledge. These responses have been classified into three general categories: Affective Characteristics, Classroom Performance, and Professional Training/Expertise (see Figure 1).

I have tried to extrapolate from the data the traits deemed most significant by the students in three general areas:

by gender

by level of proficiency

by nationality/language group

TABLE 1

Qualities	Male (N=36)	Female (N=35)
1)Kind	8	3
2)Patient	31	31
3)Helpful	25	26
4)Friendly	39	23
5)Motivated	31	17
6)Knowledgeable in field	28	37
7)Love job	33	17
8)Intelligent	8	20
9)Able to communicate ideas	28	46
10)Willing to answer questions	6	17
11)Hard-working	8	3
12)Able to challenge students	22	28
13)Organized	28	34
14)Able to explain material clearly	56	49
15)Have experience	25	9
16)Enthusiastic	22	11
17)Knowledgeable about the material	22	31
18)Male/female	0	0
19)Good educational background	11	11
20)Can relate to students/ understand their problems	33	31
21)"Active" and energetic	14	26
22)Polite; respects students	19	23
23)Beautiful	6	0

*All scores to be read as percentages

FIGURE 1

GROUPING OF TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS

AFFECTIVE CHARACTERISTICS
#1 - be kind

#2 - be patient

#3 - be helpful

#4 - be friendly

#10- be willing to answer questions

#20- have the ability to relate to the students and understand their problems

#22- be polite and respect the students

CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE ASPECTS
#5 - be motivated

#7 - love his/her job

#9 - be able to communicate ideas to the class

#11- be hard-working

#12- be able to challenge the students

#13- be organized

#14- be able to explain material clearly

#16- be enthusiastic

#21- be "active" and energetic when teaching

PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE/TRAINING
#6 - be knowledgeable in his/her field

#8 - be intelligent

#15- have experience

#17- be knowledgeable about the material he/she is teaching

#19- have good educational background

MISCELLANEOUS
#18- be male/female
#23- be beautiful

TABLE 2

Preferences According to Gender:
Contrasting Features

Qualities	Male (N=36)	Female (N=35)
4)Friendly	39	23
5)Motivated	31	17
6)Knowledgeable in field	28	37
7)Love job	33	17
8)Intelligent	8	20
9)Able to communicate ideas	28	46
10)Willing to answer questions	6	17
14)Able to explain material clearly	56	49
15)Have experience	25	9
16)Enthusiastic	22	11
17)Knowledgeable about material	22	31
21)"Active" and energetic	14	26

*All scores to be read as percentages

As can be seen from Table 2, being friendly, motivated, loving one's job, and being enthusiastic were chosen more often by males than females. Having experience was chosen almost three times as often by males as being significant. In contrast, females chose being intelligent, able to communicate ideas, and being "active" and energetic in the classroom as being more important. Being willing to answer questions was chosen almost three times as often by the females.

Being able to explain material clearly received the strongest response from both groups, though chosen more often by males (56%). Though being knowledgeable about the material one is teaching was chosen by only 22% of the males and 31% of the females, ten of the thirty-five females ranked this item as #1. Also, ten of the females ranked being knowledgeable in one's field as #1 (6) or #2 (4).

TABLE 2A

Preferences According to Gender:
Similar Features

Qualities	Male (N=36)	Female (N=35)
2)Patient	31	31
3)Helpful	25	26
19)Good educational background	11	11
20)Can relate to students; understand problems	33	31

*All scores to be read as percentages

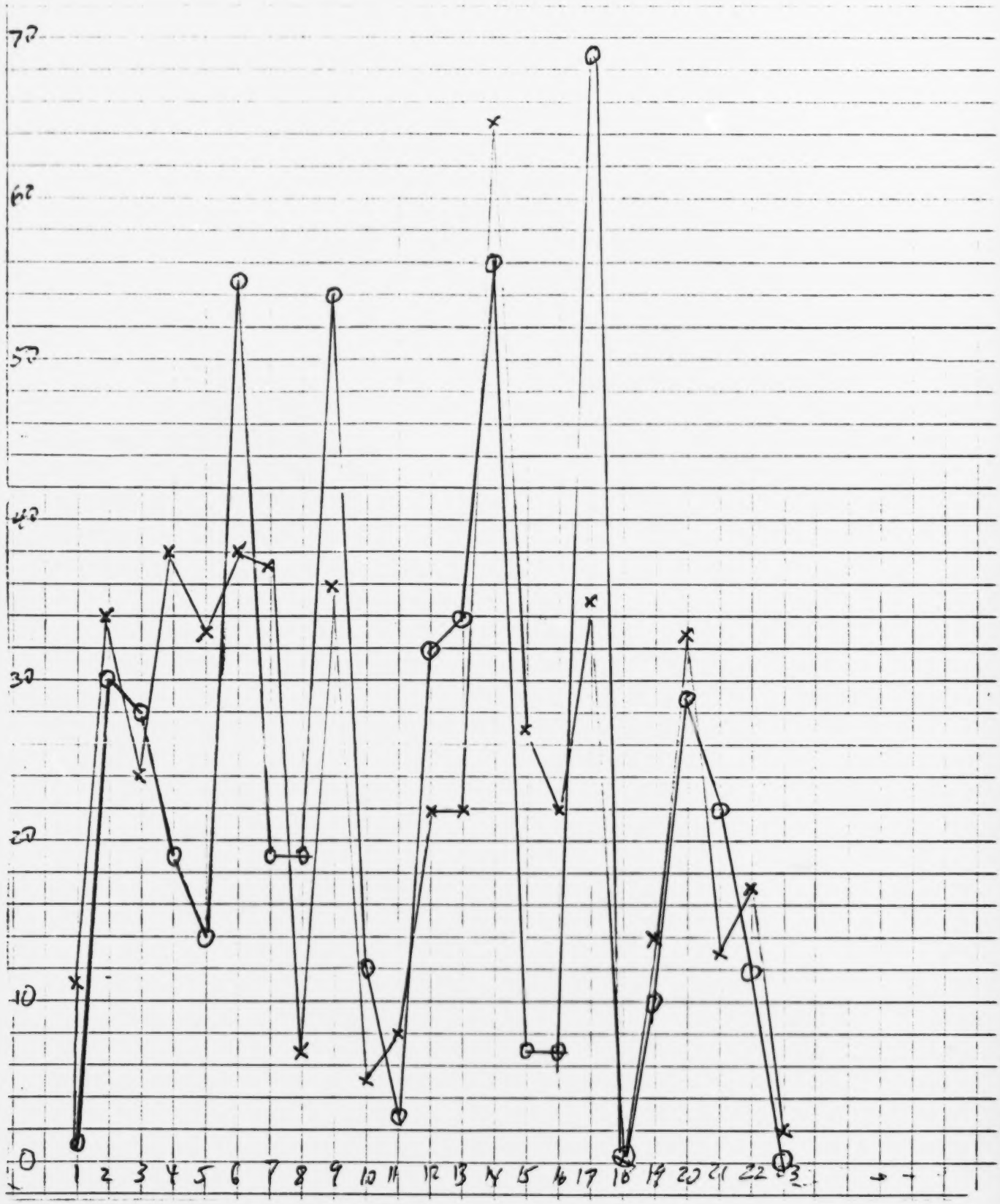
Note: Having good educational background and experience were not ranked as significant by females. Having experience was ranked equally low by the males.

If we weight the responses according to preference (see Figure 2) giving a value of 1 to each preference ranked #5 and a values of 5 to each preference ranked #1, and we consider the components grouped under three headings: affective characteristics, classroom performance, and professional expertise/training, the males favored the affective characteristics overall, as seen in Table 3. The females favored the professional expertise/training aspects overall. The classroom performance components were ranked almost equally by both males and females. These were valued significantly more overall than the other two areas.

TABLE 3

	Males	Females
Affective qualities	162	131
Classroom performance	258	241
Expertise/ training	121	160

FIGURE 2


WEIGHTED TOTALS
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23
NUMBERED RESPONSES
o denotes Females
x denotes Males

If we look at preferences according to level (see Table 4), clearly the most significant qualities for the lowest group surveyed, Level B, were patience and the ability to explain material clearly, both chosen by 62% of the students. Level C-1, which is a weak group, chose being able to explain material clearly as extremely important, with 81% of the students selecting this characteristic. In fact, this characteristic decreases by Level E (to 31%) and then is not significant by Level F.
By Level D, being able to communicate ideas becomes significant and continues to be so, with 63% of the most advanced students, in Level F, choosing this item, all ranking it as #2.
Being able to challenge the students becomes more significant in Levels D and E. The Level E students selected #13, being organized, and #5, being motivated, as very important, with 54% of the students choosing those items.

Students in Level C-2 overwhelmingly chose being knowledgeable about the material as important, with the overall response being 83%.

The significant affective qualities chosen by the lowest group were patience and friendliness. Patience was not chosen to be significant by any other group. Levels C-1 and C-2 also chose being friendly as significant, but none of the upper level groups chose this quality as important. Being helpful and relating to students and their problems appeared as more significant.

The clearly outstanding class performance aspect for the two lowest groups was being able to explain material clearly. This diminishes and by Levels E and F is no longer significant. Being able to communicate ideas, not significant for the three lowest groups, becomes important for all three high groups, with 63% of Level F choosing this response, all ranking it second highest in importance. Being able to challenge the students becomes more important in Levels D and E. The Level E students also selected #13, being organized, and #5, being motivated, as very important, with 54% of the students choosing these items.

As for professional characteristics, Level C-2 overwhelmingly chose being knowledgeable about the material one is teaching as being important, with 83% of the students choosing this item. Levels D and E also found this to be important. In contrast, the students in the other groups mentioned being knowledgeable in the field as being important. This might have depended upon interpretation. However, it is significant that both of these relate to professional expertise, but the choices of #15, having experience, and #19, good educational background, were not chosen as significant by any group.

TABLE 4

PREFERENCES ACCORDING TO LEVEL

Qualities	B	C-1	C-2	D	E	F
Affective Components:						
2)Patient	62					
3)Helpful					38	
4)Friendly	38	36	50			
20)Can relate to students; understand problems			50		46	
Classroom Performance Aspects						
5)Motivated	38				54	
7)Love job	38		50			
9)Able to communicate ideas				57	46	63
12)Able to challenge students				50	38	
13)Organized			41		54	
14)Able to explain material clearly	62	81	41	57	31	
16)Enthusiastic						63
Professional Expertise/Training						
6)Knowledgeable in field	38	55				50
17)Knowledgeable about material			83	36	38	

B=Advanced Beginner
C-1=Weak Low Intermediate
C-2=Strong Low Intermediate
D=High Intermediate
E=Advanced
F=Most Advanced

*All scores to be read as percentages

It is still easier to note the clear shift to selection of classroom performance characteristics by students in the upper levels when looking at Table 5. Of the 52% of students who chose #9, being able to communicate ideas, seven of the eleven ranked this as #2. Of the 33% of the upper level students who chose #17, being knowledgeable about the material, as being significant, five of the seven students ranked this as #1. The characteristic of being organized seems much more important to the upper level students as a group.

As for nationality, countries were grouped by location: Asia, Middle East (see Table 6), South America/ Central America, Europe (see Table 7). If we look at the preferences according to nationalities, does any sort of profile develop? The Asian students rated patience and understanding students' problems as significant. They selected communication of ideas, clarity of explaining material, and being organized as important. Being knowledge-able in the field was quite significant, being selected by 60% of the students. The European students chose 6 class-room performance aspects as being significant and were the only group to select being able to challenge students as significant (41%). The only affective quality rated as significant was #20, relating to students and understanding their problems. Fifty-two percent of the students selected being knowledgeable about the material one is teaching as important.
In contrast, the students from Latin America and the Middle East selected being patient and friendly as important. The students from the Middle East were the only group to select being polite and showing respect for the students as significant; 46% of the students chose this item. The only classroom performance aspect chosen as significant by these two groups was being able to explain material clearly, but this was chosen by an overwhelming proportion of both groups, specifically by 79% of the Latin American students and 62% of the Middle Eastern students. Both groups felt that being knowledgeable about material was important; however, the Middle Eastern students were the only group to rate having experience as being important (31%).

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

What can this feedback from students tell us? Can we learn anything or draw any conclusions from this data? After considering the characteristics generated during our class's brainstorming session and looking at the data collected, I decided to see how programs seeking "effective" ESL professionals advertised and what their expectations and requirements seemed to be. After looking at a sampling of advertisements, some for teachers in the United States in various programs, others for teachers who

TABLE 5

PREFERENCES ACCORDING TO LEVEL CLUSTERS

Qualities	LOW	INTERMEDIATE	HIGH
Affective Components:			
2)Patient	46		
3)Helpful			33
4)Friendly	38	35	
20)Can relate to students; understand problems			38
Classroom Performance Aspects			
5)Motivated			38
9)Able to communicate ideas			52
12)Able to challenge students			33
13)Organized			52
14)Able to explain material clearly	71	50	33
16)Enthusiastic			63
Professional Expertise/Training			
6)Knowledgeable in field	46		29
17)Knowledgeable about material		46	33

Low=Level B, Level C-1
Intermediate=Level C-2, Level D
High=Level E, Level F

*All scores to be read as percentages

TABLE 6

PREFERENCES ACCORDING TO NATIONALITIES

Qualities	Asia	Middle East
Affective Characteristics		
2)Patient	40	38
4)Friendly		54
20)Can relate to students; understand problems	47	
22)Polite; respects students		46
Classroom Performance Aspects		
9)Able to communicate ideas	40	38
12)Able to challenge students		
13)Organized	33	
14)Able to explain material clearly	40	62
Professional Expertise/Training		
6)Knowledgeable in field	60	46
15)Have experience		31
17)Knowledgeable about material		46

*All scores to be read as percentages

TABLE 7

PREFERENCES ACCORDING TO NATIONALITIES

Qualities	S.A./C.A.	Europe
Affective Characteristics		
2)Patient	43	
4)Friendly	50	
20)Can relate to students; understand problems	29	
22)Polite; respects students		
Classroom Performance Aspects		
5)Motivated	29	
7)Loves job	29	33
9)Able to communicate ideas	29	44
12)Able to challenge students	29	44
13)Organized		44
14)Able to explain material clearly	79	50
16)Enthusiastic	29	
21)"Active" and energetic when teaching	29	
Professional Expertise/Training		
6)Knowledgeable in field	29	
15)Have experience		
17)Knowledgeable about material	36	67

S.A. denotes South America
C.A. denotes Central America

*All scores to be read as percentages

would like to teach English abroad, I noted that these advertisements generally stressed degrees and often teaching experience as important. They generally did not mention "affective" qualities, those qualities that seem to be very difficult to measure. They generally did not mention classroom performance either. In contrast, when professional traits were mentioned, the students generally did not refer to one's educational background or experience.

If students were writing advertisements for the teachers they would like to have teaching them, what traits or characteristics would they mention? Some of the students' responses might be predictable, others surprising; some of the students would mention patience, understanding and friendliness; some would stress respect. The ability to be CLEAR seems to be definitely significant for the great majority of these adult second language learners. Being knowledgeable about one's field of expertise and the material one is teaching in the individual class is also important to the students, not necessarily one's degree or years of experience. The students seem to be evaluating the teacher more on the basis of what they deal with every day in the classroom.

Of course, these findings are the result of a survey compiled from one program. Perhaps one cannot generalize as to what students in other programs see as "effective teachers" but I think that it can be helpful for the students to tell us how they think they learn best. One of my students, Joannie Huang, said, "When their relationship becomes the best, the students can learn the most." If we agree that the teacher can create a positive atmosphere for learning, we need to determine the kinds of behaviors which can help to stimulate and maintain that positive atmosphere in addition to providing stimulating teaching materials and an excellent curriculum.

If this sample is representative of students in other Intensive English programs, it seems that we should focus more on HOW WE ARE TEACHING rather than just on WHAT WE ARE TEACHING. Also, if these students are typical, we need to pay considerably more attention to the clarity of our explanations and may need to adjust our teaching style, depending on the level of proficiency of the students we are instructing. (The fact that the upper level students picked six classroom performance characteristics as significant seems to indicate that these students want more substance.) Although it may not be possible to please every language group/ cultural group which may be used to or prefer certain affective traits, especially if one has a heterogeneous class, we can be cognizant of the fact that our international students bring differing expectations of "teachers" with them to the classroom.

I would like to close with some memorable quotations from my students:

A good teacher is like a good parent. (Lilia, Panama)

A good teacher can affect students in behavior; that's why Chinese people always say teaching is the highest, hardest, and most important job. I remember one Chinese proverb that says that teacher is as important as God, earth, king, parents. (Ming, Taiwan)

The teacher's aim is not holding the student's hand while he walks; the students should walk by themselves under the teacher's guiding. (Mitchell, People's Republic of China)

The ideal teacher is one who grows, learns, and improves herself along with her students. (Francesco, Italy)

ON TEACHERS AND TEACHING: REFLECTIONS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Quotations From Our Students

Compiled by Rima Katz
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I would like to share some thoughts with you written by some of the students in our program about effective teaching and the qualities they value in teachers. I hope that you will find them interesting, informative, and even inspiring.

My appreciation goes to the students who shared their thoughts and feelings. Thank you!

Rima Katz

ON BEING HUMAN

For me, an important quality for a good teacher is humanity. For me a good teacher is a "person"; maybe this is strange to say but there are a lot of teachers who don't care about students' feelings; they don't care if you are in a bad mood or if you have any kind of problem! I have met some of these teachers and it isn't a good experience.

A good teacher is a person who thinks you are a person also and he/she proves it.

Enrique (Canary Islands)

ON RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING

He should not teach the class as a mass of people, but as a group of individuals. He should make every person in the class feel safe and respected.

Avital (Israel)

Last thing I realize recently is the teacher has to open her mind to all of her students, especially P.A.L.S. students because they are from several countries and they have different education.

Rung (Thailand)

A good teacher must like her students and respect them; she must respect herself and take pride in herself; otherwise, she cannot respect her students.

She will have an understanding of her students and be able to relate to them. She will see her students as individuals and acknowledge their differences; she must know how to encourage the self-development and growth of her students.

Francesco (Italy)

To be a good teacher, one needs to analyze each student's problem. Knowing each student's problems causes teaching them effectively. The most important thing is being familiar with the students and knowing the students' characters well.

Naoki (Japan)

...he or she should like and respect his students; then he or she can be an authority in the class.

Levent (Turkey)

A good teacher should have additional abilities besides his or her area of knowledge. He should know each student's problems relating to the subject that he is teaching about and then can help in solving the students' problems and improving their ability. He should always be happy to receive good criticism from his students.

Lukas (Indonesia)

A good teacher should be the one who understands you and your problems. He/she has to try to help you out and find out if you are shy or not. She/he has to talk to you a lot and try to help you.

Mariangelica (Venezuela)

A good teacher knows why you are doing well in class; sometimes you can see in the teacher your father or the person you want to be.

Enrique (Canary Islands)

He must understand the problems of his students and be strict only when it is required. He must help his students to overcome their problems and to understand them when they have some difficulties; he must make the students consider him to be a friend. I think that when a teacher is like the one which I describe above he will be really a "good teacher."

Petros (Greece)

ON CLARITY

A good teacher is a person who can get his ideas or his knowledge across to the students. There are lots of teachers who have very good educations and experience but they fail to make the students understand what they say. These people, because they have lots of education, unintentionally say things that are very incomprehensible to the students so the students don't pay any attention when they speak. As a result, the students don't like the lesson and after that the problems start.

Evi (Greece)

A good teacher should develop a method of teaching so students clearly understand what he means.

Windrati (Indonesia)

It is obvious that a good teacher teaches the students clearly what the teacher must teach.

Toshihide (Japan)

A good teacher tries to explain the material as clearly as possible. When the teacher gives classes and the students understand everything, that is a good class and that is a good teacher.

Samuel (Canary Islands)

ON PERSONALITY

Her personality is as important as her scholarship.

Francesco (Italy)

"Personality" is quite important. If a teacher is energetic, the class will be very active and creative. If a teacher is not easy-going and patient, the student will be afraid of asking questions. It can also directly affect the student's learning attitude and class participation.

Christine (Taiwan)

I think that if one teacher is friendly, polite and helpful to the students, the students will appreciate him and help him to make the lesson as good an experience as they can have.

Christos (Cyprus)

ON PATIENCE

Also he has to be very patient, because learning is a slow process; each individual has his own way of understanding, so if a teacher can reach out and understand the individual's way, that, in my opinion, is a good teacher.

Munir (United Arab Emirates)

ON LOVING ONE'S JOB

A good teacher loves very much the job. This is an important condition but also it can't exist without a special personality. There are a lot of people that teach, but just a few educate and learn from their pupils.

Alfredo (Colombia)

As in other types of jobs, it is indispensable that she/he loves his work very much...

Octavio (Colombia)

A teacher needs to love his job and be friendly.

Ernestine (Cameroon)

A good teacher should show the students that he really enjoys teaching and he is very much concerned about the students' progress.

Betty (Korea)

A good teacher must have a teaching motivation. It is necessary for a good teacher. For example, if you don't love your job, you will not spend a lot of time discussing the subject with your students and help them with their work either.

Christine (Taiwan)

I think the teacher has to love his job, because if he does, he will work better. He has to be organized, intelligent, active, and enthusiastic. Being a good teacher is a hard work.

Gilberto (Honduras)

ON BEING OPEN-MINDED

A good teacher, I believe, should hear the students' opinions and must discuss with them all problems.

Evi (Greece)

A good teacher must be open-minded to accept all types of opinions.

Lilia (Panama)

It is necessary to understand the students' point of view and the students' problems.

Mirna (Guatemala)

ON KNOWLEDGE

In my opinion, a good teacher is one who has comprehensive knowledge about his subject, and can transfer his knowledge to students. This means that a teacher needs to have a very good relationship with the class, because if he hasn't, he won't be able to teach well.

Fereydoun (Iran)

The teacher has to try to contribute her knowledge to her students as much as possible.

Rung (Thailand)

A good teacher has to know about the subject that he or she is teaching very well. That is very important. Also, he has to communicate his or her ideas very well.

Gilberto (Honduras)

A good teacher must have a very good knowledge of the topic that he is teaching.

Lilia (Panama)

ON EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE

If a teacher has teaching experience, he will be able to discuss the subject, to explain something as simply as he can, so it can be easy for the students to understand.

Christos (Cyprus)

A good teacher must have a lot of experience and educational background, because if he has those things, he will teach better.

Gultekin (Turkey)

SOME CLOSING THOUGHTS ON TEACHERS, IN GENERAL

I remember one Chinese proverb that says that teacher is as important as god, earth (in China is also a kind of spirit), king, parents.

A good teacher can affect students in behavior; that's why Chinese people always say teaching is the highest, hardest and most important job.

Ming (Taiwan)

The teacher's aim is not holding the student's hand while he walks; the students should walk by themselves under the teacher's guiding.

Mitchell (China)

The ideal teacher is one who grows, learns, and improves herself along with her students.

Francesco (Italy)

Confucius said, "Teacher is one who teaches, tutors, and removes doubts." He also said "He who one day is your teacher one day will be your parent." Both of those two proverbs are very clear in describing a good teacher. A good teacher not only must have good knowledge about what he/she is teaching. He/she should also love teaching, so he can teach all his knowledge to his students very well. A good teacher must be a parent and takes care of his students as well as his own children. When their relationship becomes the best, the students can learn the most. Then the teacher can be the most helpful good teacher in the world.

Joannie (Taiwan)